

Petition wants to ban affirmative action in NU system, rest of state

JILLIAN WHITNEY
STAFF WRITER

Nebraska is being put under the race microscope by a petition to alter the state's constitution. The petition would make participation in affirmative action programs unlawful.

Ward Connerly, the president of the American Civil Rights Institute and the American Civil Rights Coalition, is the main sponsor of the petition, which will state: "The state shall not discriminate against or grant preferential treatment to any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity or national origin in the operation of public education, public employment, or public contracting."

Connerly has led similar campaigns in California, Michigan and Washington, all of which were successful.

If the petition is successful, an initiative will be placed on Nebraska's 2008 ballot for voters to decide on.

"The petition will call for every Nebraskan to be treated as an equal when they interact with their government, city, county, state, university, any non-federal entity in the state of Nebraska," said Connerly. "Over the years, there have been a number of individuals in the state of Nebraska that has asked us to help them qualify initiatives for the ballot."

The petition could significantly affect University of Nebraska schools and their students, said UNO

Director of Enrollment David Cicotello in an e-mail to the *Gateway*. He said he would be disappointed if the petition passed because it would hinder diversity and enrollment in universities.

"Anything that has a chilling effect, an adverse effect on providing access to college is, in my view, problematic and certainly controversial," said Cicotello. "The Connerly initiative falls into that category."

Defending the petition as a racial equalizer, Connerly argued that any form of affirmative action was still discrimination.

"If they are getting a leg up the probability is high that someone else is getting a leg down," said Connerly. "How do you justify discriminating against somebody just because you believe you will be giving someone else a leg up in society?"

Franklin Thompson, associate professor in the College of Education and Omaha city council member, said, although he sees some benefit to Connerly's petition, it is too soon to consider such a drastic step.

"I know we need affirmative action now, I know doing away with it in 2008 is wrong, but I also know that ultimately we are going to have to face the music and phase it out some day," said Thompson. "Today is just not the day. Not enough progress has been made yet. We are not at a level playing field right now and we need more time to get there ... We have made tremendous progress in the last 30 years. Look where we have come from and just think what we can accomplish in 30 more."

Bill Kelly, executive producer of NET, led the production of the filming and listened in on some of the discussions. Kelly's main goal was to involve more citizens in the immigration decision-making processes.

"We wanted to develop a set of discussions of people ordinarily not in the process of government official public policy roles," said Kelly.

With the wide range of local citizens involved, the discussion was insightful and multifaceted.

"They had a very balanced dialogue," said Kelly.

Several UNO professors also helped organize the discussions.

Among them were Paul Sather, director of UNO Service Learning Academy; Deb Smith-Howell, associate vice chancellor for academic affairs; and Nora Bacon, an associate professor in the Department of Education.

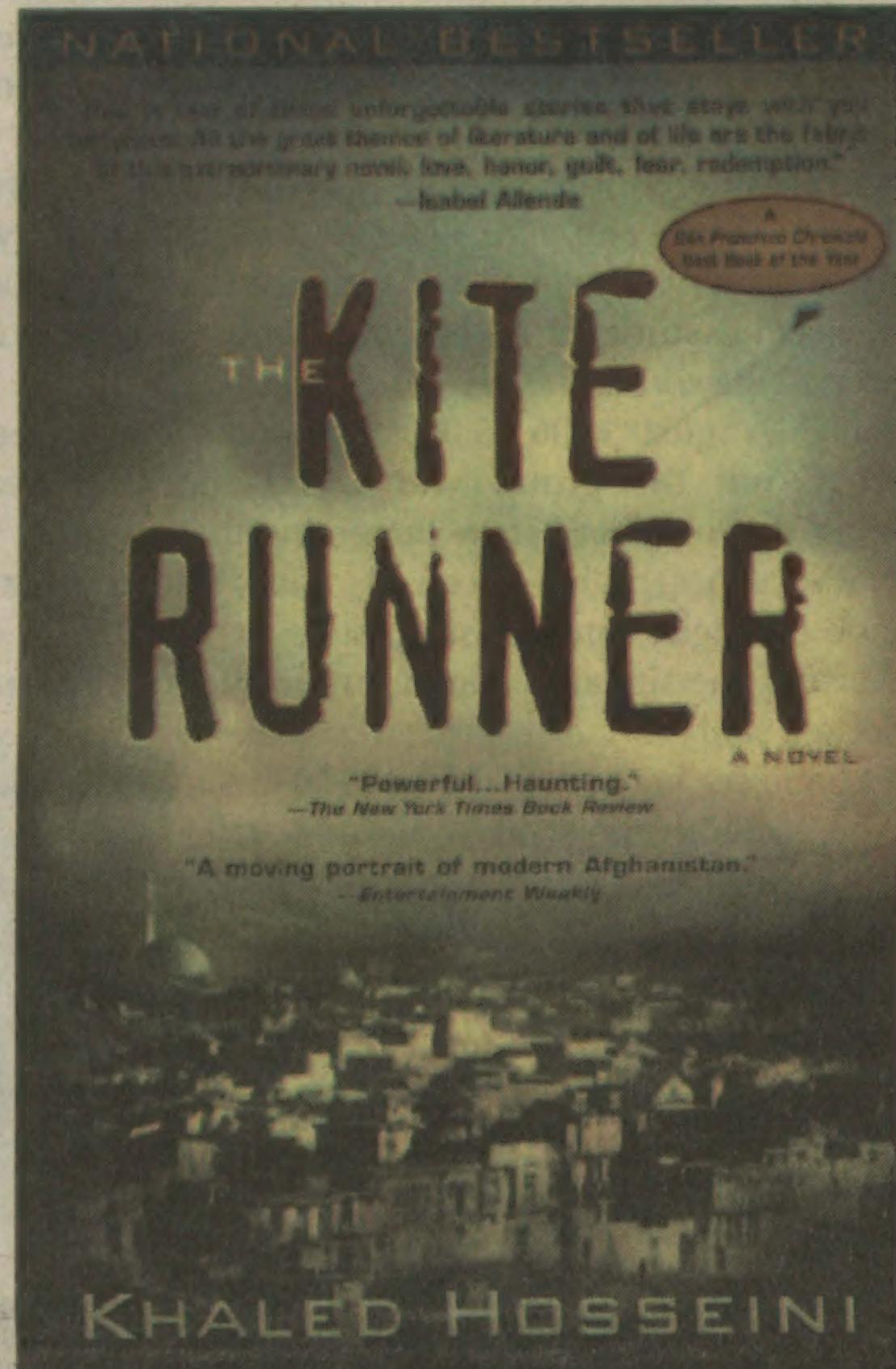
Jeremy Lipschultz, director of the School of Communications, listened in on some of the discussions. He said he was impressed by the depth of concern many participants brought up.

"It was a pretty rich discussion," said Lipschultz.

Realizing that UNO is no different than anywhere else in Omaha as far as immigration concerns go, Lipschultz pointed out the campus would have to address changing immigration issues, just as the rest of the city.

The question is, said Lipschultz, "how will UNO respond to the increasingly diverse student population?"

Omaha, Los Angeles selected for sneak peak of *Kite Runner* movie

EUGENE KIM
STAFF WRITER

Thanks to a joint effort by Paramount Pictures, the Afghanistan Relief Organization and the UNO Center for Afghan Studies, Omaha was one of two cities chosen to pre-screen *The Kite Runner*.

The film is an adaptation of Khaled Hosseini's best-selling novel and opened in Omaha and Los Angeles last weekend. Omaha's screening was held Sunday at the Cinema Center, located at 2828 S. 82nd Ave.

The Kite Runner is based on a childhood friendship between two boys growing up in an ethnically turbulent Kabul, Afghanistan.

In a pivotal scene, Hassan, a Hazara child played by Ahmad Khan Mahmoodzada, is raped in an alley by a Pashtun bully played by Zekiria Ebrahimi.

The scene caused fear of a backlash in the Middle East. Due to possible threats, the children starring in the film were relocated for the opening of the movie, according to a report in *The New York Times*.

However, amidst the controversy, the movie has already received widespread praise.

Early screening tickets were available through the UNO Center for Afghan Studies.

Dean of International Studies and Programs, Tom Gouttierre, also spoke before the movie, sharing his experiences with the director of the movie, Marc Forster. Gouttierre said Forster believed "the movie was true to the story," and true to its people.

Gouttierre said he hoped people would be moved by the movie to consider becoming host families for Middle Eastern foreign exchange students.

Paramount Pictures delayed the movie's release for six weeks to allow the actors to be relocated. Widespread release is set for Dec. 14.

Documentary shows community discussion at UNO



The audience watches as refugees from Thailand arrive in Nebraska. "Dialogues in Democracy 2007" involved interviews of community members talking about immigration and the life and paths that many immigrants take when living in America. The movie screening took place Friday afternoon in the student center.

REBECCA WHITNEY
STAFF WRITER

About five percent of Nebraska's 1.7 million citizens are foreign-born immigrants according to a statement by NET Television. A documentary screening held Nov. 30 at UNO addressed many of the issues that affect those immigrants in south Omaha.

The focus of the documentary was a community discussion and dialogue held Oct. 14 at UNO. The discussion was on immigration issues in Omaha.

The "By the People: Dialogues in Democracy" immigration discussion groups consisted of 100 community participants with their thoughts, opinions and ideas on incorporating immigrants into American

culture.

Bill Kelly, executive producer of NET, led the production of the filming and listened in on some of the discussions. Kelly's main goal was to involve more citizens in the immigration decision-making processes.

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Omaha Weather



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NEWS
News you
can use

page 2



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

FEATURES

Santa
Paws

page 4

ARTS & LEISURE

Seether
plays Omaha

page 5

INDEX

News	2	Arts & Leisure ..	5
Features	3	Classifieds	8
Sports	4		

8 Pages

News

Taylor Muller | News Editor

Page 2

news@unogateway.com | December 4, 2006

Cubans demand return of independent universities, moral-building curricula

BY MICHAEL MARTINEZ
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

HAVANA (MCT) — More than 5,000 students, professors, intellectuals, Catholics and parents have signed a petition seeking a return of independent and religious universities, all of which the communist government closed more than 40 years ago, organizers said Wednesday.

The University Students Without Borders petition drive demands that autonomous institutions of higher education be created out of shuttered schools or converted from existing government schools, supporters and organizers said.

Human-rights activists and government opponents involved in the campaign charged that the country's universities stifle free speech and academic freedom while ejecting students and faculty who criticize Fidel Castro and the socialist state.

Since August 2006, 5,000 signatures have been collected, but the group will spend the next year doubling that number before presenting their petition to the National Assembly for consideration, said organizer Rolando Rodriguez and his supporters.

Most of the signatures are from university students, supporters said.

Organizers conceded that no independent funding exists to establish the schools but they have approached Cuba's Roman Catholic Church about reopening Santo Tomas de Villanueva University as an independent

school. The church didn't respond to the group's letter, organizers said.

Supporters said they would also favor colleges set up by other faiths as long as they weren't controlled by the government, saying they favored a curriculum emphasizing character as well as civic and moral values.

A Catholic church official told The Associated Press that he hadn't heard of the proposal. Cuba's Cardinal Jaime Ortega has spoken of the idea of Catholic schools in Cuba, or at least teaching religion in schools, but he has been unsuccessful.

After Castro took control of Cuba in a 1959 revolution, he closed Catholic schools and repressed religion until 1992, when the country ended its atheist status, even while permitting Communist Party members to practice Catholicism and other faiths. Castro has noted that his nation's education system has eradicated high levels of illiteracy that had existed before his takeover.

Organizers acknowledged that the petition is likely to be rejected by the communist government. But at a minimum, the campaign raises public awareness "so that everyone can know what's going on in the universities" in Cuba, said Minaldo Ramos Salgado, 44, a signature collector.

Ricardo Rodriguez Borrero, 40, a pro-democracy activist who would like his four daughters, ages 11, 8, 5 and 2, to attend an autonomous university someday, said political indoctrination permeates college campuses.

"The universities here aren't an altruistic activity," he said. "Sometimes they cancel classes just to have a

political march."

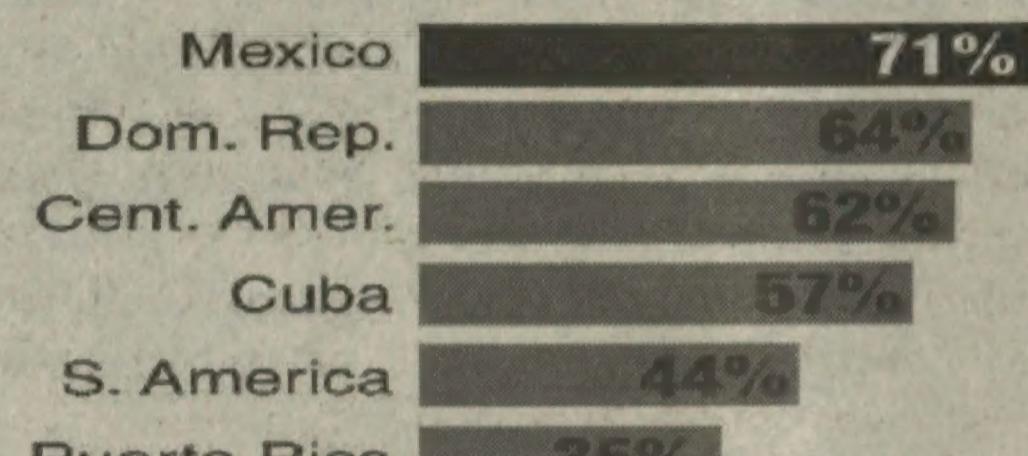
Castro has highlighted his country's accomplishments in training physicians, including the graduation of eight Americans from Cuba's medical school earlier this year.

But one petition drive supporter, Lester Perez Sanchez, a physician specialist in allergies who attended medical school in the 1980s, said political indoctrination has even affected medical training.

"From my time until now, the quality of medical school has been bad," Perez said. "If a person opposes the government in school, they are kicked out. It's been happening for a while."

Speaking little English

Foreign-born Hispanics who speak little or no English, by place of birth:



© 2007 MCT
Source: Pew Hispanic Center
Graphic: Judy Treble

News You Can Use

COMPILED BY
SCOTT STEWART
EDITOR IN CHIEF

Dialogue offers chance to hear from Muslim women

Who: Muslim Student Association.

What: Difficult Dialogue discussion on "Women in Islam."

Where: Milo Bail Student Center Dodge Room.

When: Friday, Dec. 7, 3 p.m.

Why: To help clear away misconceptions about Muslim women by listening to actual Muslims talk about their lifestyles without media distortion.

How: Free and open to campus community.

Child Care Center calls for Giving Tree donations

Who: Chancellor's Commission on the Status of Women & UNO Child Care Center.

What: Donation drive.

Where: Child Care Center, near the Thompson Alumni Center.

When: Now through end of semester.

Why: To assist the children supported by the Child Care Center.

How: Visit the Child Care Center to view the giving tree or go online to mbsc.unomaha.edu/unocc/cocannouncement.php for a list of requested supplies.

Participants needed for Ph.D. research study

Who: Faculty, staff, students or community members 19 years or older who can read and write English.

What: Research study.

Where: Online (30-45 minutes) and in-person (30-60 minutes).

When: In-person session held according to schedule of participants.

Why: To enable a UNO student to complete her thesis while earning a \$10 gift certificate (for the online portion) and \$20 in cash (for the in-person portion).

How: Begin the online session at surveymonkey.com/UNOHermanDissertation.

ITS offers training to transition campus to new office suite

Who: Information Technology Services.

What: Hands-on training sessions in Microsoft Office 2007.

Where: Excel session in Room 104 of Durham Science Center; Word session in Room 007R of Roskens Hall.

When: Excel session from 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 7; Word session from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on Thursday, Dec. 13.

Why: To improve your ability to transition from

Microsoft Office 2003 to the latest version, which was installed in UNO computer labs at the beginning of the fall semester.

How: Visit api.unomaha.edu/calendar.php; select 'December' from the drop-down menu and click 'go'; enter a SAP personal number; click 'sign up'; and click 'OK' to confirm.

PRSSA launches campus Toys for Tots campaign

Who: UNO Chapter of Public Relations Student Society of America and the School of Communication.

What: Donation drive for U.S. Marine's Toys for Tots campaign.

Where: Room 140 of Arts and Sciences Hall.

When: Now through Dec. 21.

Why: To provide new toys to needy children in the Omaha area.

How: Drop off your donations to the campaign location.

Campus hosts big band concert tonight

Who: Aviation Institute and Omaha's AVI8ORS Ensemble.

What: "A Red, White and Blue White Christmas" concert.

Where: Strauss Performing Arts Center.

When: Today, Tuesday, Dec. 4, at 7 p.m.

Why: To experience a World War II USO-style show with vintage 1940s big band music.

How: Tickets are available at the door at \$15 for adults and \$12.50 for seniors and children under 12 years old.

Video equipment available from library

Who: Criss Library.

What: Three Sony Handycam video cameras and tripods available for use outside the library.

Where: Circulation Desk.

When: Cameras are available for three-day loans with renewals possible.

Why: To allow faculty, staff and students to learn how to utilize audiovisual equipment.

How: Bring your MavCard to the Circulation Desk and complete a checkout form.

Kwanza luncheon scheduled for Friday

Who: Student Programming Organization.

What: Kwanzaa luncheon.

Where: Milo Bail Student Center Fireplace Lounge.

When: Friday, Dec. 7, 11:30 a.m.

Why: To celebrate cultural diversity on campus.

How: Free and open to campus community.

Test anxiety, finals week prep seminars rescheduled
Who: UNO Counseling Center.

What: Seminars on managing test anxiety and preparing for finals week.

Where: Test anxiety in Milo Bail Student Center's U Mo Ho Room; finals week prep in Milo Bail Student Center's Dodge Room A.

When: Test anxiety from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 6; finals week prep from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 13.

Why: To help stressed-out students perform better during the end of the semester.

How: Attend the seminar, which is free to UNO students, faculty and staff.

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Omaha

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Features

Patrick Doty | Features Editor

Page 3

features@unogateway.com | December 4, 2007

Got a strong vocab? Prove it for poverty

BY SHRUTI TIBREWALA
THE STANFORD DAILY (STANFORD)

STANFORD, Calif. (U-WIRE) — Finally getting bored of all those Facebook.com applications? Looking for a new way to "waste" time? FreeRice.com, a Web site launched last month that enables users to improve vocabulary while helping end world hunger, has become extremely popular around campus. Students, however, expressed mixed opinions about the value of the site.

The site selects a random word from the 10,000 words that founder John Breen entered by hand. If the user chooses the right definition out of four possible choices, 20 grains of rice — just increased from 10 grains this past Wednesday — are donated to the World Food Programme, an agency of the United Nations. The site monitors the user's vocabulary level, with each correct guess increasing the difficulty level (and each incorrect one lowering it).

You might think 20 grains is a tiny amount. On Oct. 7, the day the site was launched, 830 grains of rice were donated — barely enough for a bowl. As of press time, more than 4.5 trillion grains of rice have been donated.

FreeRice was started by hunger and poverty activist John Breen, who hopes that while users play the game, at least some will click on the link to his website, Poverty.com, to see what needs to be done to end poverty.

Marcus Williams, class of 2009, who is spearheading the Society for International Affairs at Stanford's Kiva, an initiative to reduce poverty, was excited to see how quickly the site spread across campus.

"I think it is one of many innovations that merges the Internet directly with poverty alleviation," he said. "It seemed like I heard about it one minute and then, within a day, everyone was toying around with it."

David Kuo, class of 2008, co-Director of Stanford Project on Hunger, said there is much to be appreciated in FreeRice.com.

"It is not the only way to combat hunger online, but the novel concept and wide appeal are encouraging," Kuo said. "Not everyone stops to think about the global impact of hunger but these sites can impact the millions who play and be the new way of informing people of the world hunger problem."

Nevertheless, many students had not heard of FreeRice.com. Once asked about it, however, they quickly became addicts.

"The fact that I'm helping feed people in third world countries while sitting at my computer matching up big words is more than terrific," said Miriam Marks, class of 2011.

Revti Gupta, class of 2009, on the other hand, did not see what the big deal was about, adding that there are better ways to make use of the Internet to raise awareness.

"The Web site will be quickly forgotten after the initial hoopla. The vocab exercise gets really boring and it will take a lot of time to work up a donation large enough to make a difference to enough people," said Gupta.

While David Delgado, class of 2011, said he loves FreeRice because it is challenging and interesting, he had just one question.

"Why rice?" he asked. "Rice is not very nutritious, especially if processed rice is being used!"

Vinney Le, class of 2011, said he thought FreeRice trivializes the problem of world hunger and disconnects people from the issue.

"Equating a vocabulary game with feeding hungry people is sad," he said. "It does not get them engaged in the actual problem; it does not raise awareness or make people care. Nevertheless, it is better than nothing."

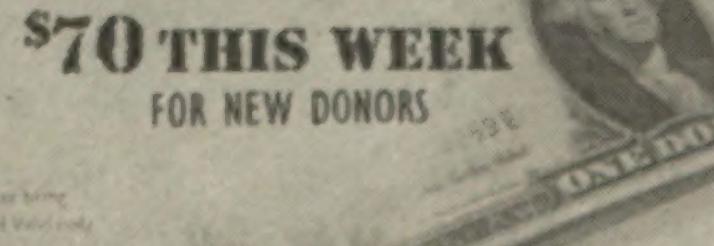
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PRSSA helps puppies' Christmas wishes come true

ANDREA BARBE
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Students brought the pet community a little closer while raising money for a local animal shelter on Sunday.

UNO's Public Relations Student Society of America chapter sponsored its second annual "Santa Paws" on Dec. 2. This event allowed pet lovers to take their furry friends to get a picture taken with Chris Kringle.

The fundraiser took place at The Bookworm, a bookstore located on 87th and Pacific streets from noon to 3 p.m. Pictures were \$10 with all proceeds going toward the Town and Country Humane Society, a non-profit, no-kill animal shelter.

"My mom heard about Santa Paws and asked me if I wanted to join her," said UNO grad student Emmy Naylor. "She shops here [at the Bookworm] every Saturday morning and took home one of their fliers after seeing the sign in their window."

Naylor and her mother brought their two Papillons, Gracie and Tucker, to have their pictures taken while helping out the Town and Country Humane Society.

"It's great that they're dog friendly," Naylor said. "We were nervous about bringing our dogs in. Gracie's a little anxious, but she did great. Santa seemed very

good with dogs."

PRSSA member and UNO junior Meagan Phenix worked the fundraiser this year. She said many changes were made in the program from last year.

"Last year, we donated to Merlin's refuge — another non-profit, no-kill shelter. But they mainly deal with cats," Phenix said. "Since we get mostly dogs in for the event, we decided that this year we wanted to donate to a more dog-friendly shelter."

"This year we went with the Town and Country Dog Rescue Program located in Papillion. The fact that they're a no-kill shelter is a big thing. It's better to have shelters that won't put down the dogs or any animal if they're not wanted right away."

Although the event is open to all different animals, they usually only seem to draw in dogs, Phenix said.

"We had one cat this year. That was a really nice change," Phenix said. "We had two bunnies last year. That was really cute because they both sat up on Santa's chest."

Monetary donations as well as new pet supplies were also accepted as part of the fundraiser.

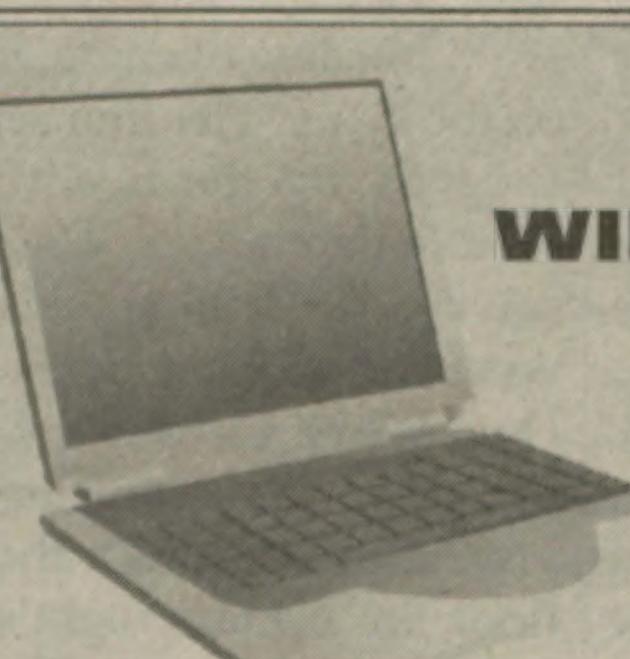
"We took about 25 pictures and had at least 30 dogs throughout the afternoon," Phenix said. "But we'd really like to keep doing fundraisers like this each year. We might even look at doing this event as at a few different places next year if everything goes over really well."



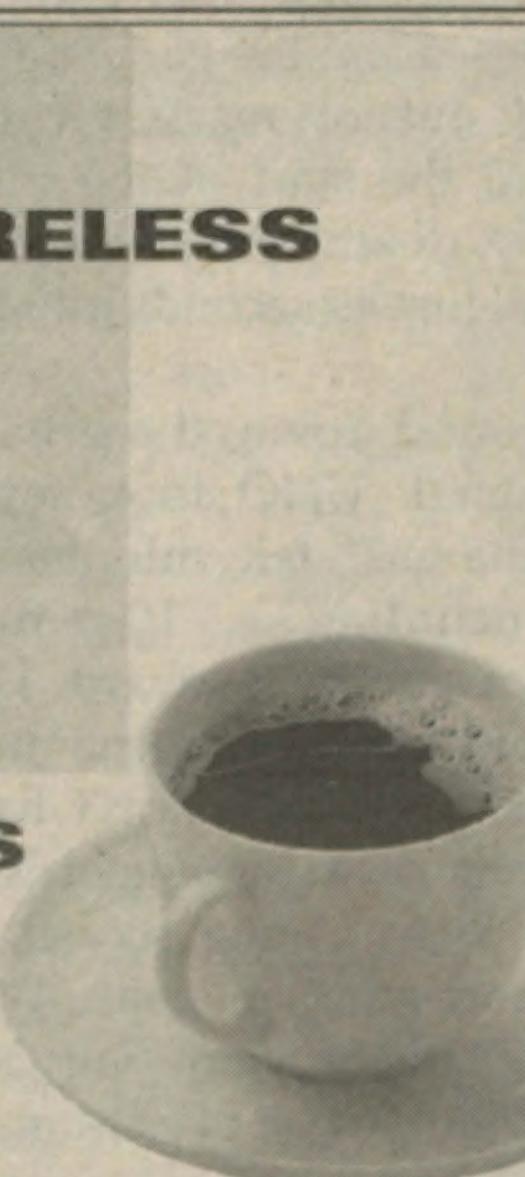
photo by Bre Gehrken

Santa Claus was played by PRSSA member and UNO student James Sewell. Here he is keeping company with five dogs, hoping their Christmas wishes come true.

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Sports

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Page 4

Jason Sibson | Sports Editor

Mavs swept by third top-ten team this season, fall to eighth in CCHA



photo by Michelle Bishop

Freshman Joey Martin scored his first two collegiate goals in the Mav's 5-4 loss to Notre Dame on Friday.

CHARLEY REED
A&L EDITOR

It was a hard weekend to be a Maverick hockey fan.

UNO (5-7-1) dropped from fifth place in the Central Collegiate Hockey Association to eighth after falling victim to a sweep from No. 7 Notre Dame in South Bend, Ind. over the weekend.

After a season of tough losses, Friday's 5-4 loss was probably one of the hardest in Head Coach Mike Kemp's career in Omaha.

Returning to the Joyce Center, the Mavs remembered the last-minute Irish comeback to win 4-2 last season. With that game undoubtedly in mind, UNO dominated the play through the first period. Led by a breakout performance from freshman forward Joey Martin, UNO broke out to an early 1-0 lead, which they extended to 3-0 halfway through the second period thanks to goals from Martin and JJ Koehler.

Things looked good for UNO, especially considering heading into the game with a bitter taste in their mouth from giving up a three-goal lead to the University of Alaska at home two weeks ago. There's no way they would let that happen again right? Well, not exactly.

After penalties by UNO's freshman Eric Olimb and sophomore Dan Swanson, Notre Dame's Kevin Deeth scored to make it 3-1 with less than three minutes left to go in the second period. But it was the next goal that deflated any momentum the Mavericks might have had. Just over a minute later, thanks to a freak bounce off the glass, a clearing pass from Christian Hanson slipped through sophomore goaltender Jeremie Dupont's pads.

"I saw it at the last second," Dupont told the *Omaha World-Herald*. "It took such a crazy bounce."

In addition to taking a 3-2 lead into the third period, UNO brought along a penalty on senior forward Brandon Scero for tripping. Thanks to the power play, it didn't take long for the Irish to not only completely wipe away the Mavericks's advantage, but also overcome it. Erik Condra scored just 48 seconds into the third period and less than two minutes later

Dan Kissel scored to put the No. 7 team in the nation up 4-3.

UNO fought back to make it 4-4 when Nick Von Bokern made an individual effort which allowed senior Mick Lawrence to notch his eighth goal of the season at 7:57. But the habitual struggles the Mavs have had in the third period all season returned as, with just over two minutes left to play, Garrett Regan scored the Irish's game-winning fifth goal.

Notre Dame would score five goals again on Saturday night, but unlike Friday's back-and-forth affair, Notre Dame's Jordan Pearce would deny UNO on each of its 16 shots.

Like Friday, and so many times throughout the season, the game never really seemed out of reach for the Mavericks until the start of the third period. Already down 2-0, UNO gave up its third goal just 49 seconds into the third period.

As time wound down, the penalty count skyrocketed. UNO took seven penalties in the last ten minutes of the game, including a 10-minute misconduct for junior forward Dan Charleston, while Notre Dame took four. However, the Mavs didn't have the same luxury of a three-goal lead and at 14:30, Ryan Thang scored an unassisted short-handed goal. With one minute left in the game Ian Cole capitalized on the power play to make the final score 5-0.

The words of senior captain Bryan Marshall are all one needs to sum up the weekend.

"It was another frustrating weekend," Marshall told the *World-Herald*. "We had a chance to make a statement against a ranked team, and we didn't do it."

The Mavericks return home this weekend to face last-place Lake Superior State in the team's final conference series until Western Michigan in January.

Men's basketball beats third-ranked team in the country, improves to 6-0

KEVIN CLEMENS
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

The Maverick men's basketball team improved to 6-0 over the weekend after defeating the third ranked team in the country in Northwest Missouri State on the road. The Mavs dominated most of the game as they beat the Bearcats 80-66.

The team's leading scorer, Michael Jenkins, led the team in scoring yet again with 21 points. Jenkins had this to say after improving to 6-0.

"It feels great, we are playing great team ball right now," Jenkins said. "The environment for tonight's game was crazy."

Jenkins has been a huge part of UNO's success this season. The junior from Bellevue is averaging over 19 points per game.

"I'm just trying to get to the line and my teammates have done a nice job of getting me open looks on the floor," Jenkins said.

With so many great shooters on this team around the perimeter it opens up the floor for Jenkins to attack the basket with ease and get to the free-throw line.

Andrew Bridger was second on the team with 18 points to go along with a game high five steals in the contest.

Stingy defense once again helped UNO control most of the game. At one point the Mavs held the Bearcats without a field goal for over nine minutes. During this time the Mavs went on a 20-5 scoring run to ultimately win the game.

UNO is now 6-0 for the first time since the 2003 season.

"We are playing hard and playing together," said Head Coach Derrin Hansen in regards to his team's early success.

This basketball team has been dominating teams not only offensively but defensively as well.

"We did a good job with the defensive pressure tonight and played well on offense," Hansen said.

The Mavs have also controlled the glass in each game this season. This time, UNO out-rebounded its opponent 39-34. Justin Peterson pulled down an impressive 12 boards by halftime and 15 for the game.

"It's been a team effort on the boards and we have done a nice job this season," Hansen said.

The Albers brothers each reached double figures on the night as Tyler had 12 points and Mitch added 11. Lance Sullivan led Northwest Missouri State with 16 points and Hunter Henry had 14 points.

These two teams will rematch in Omaha on Dec. 14.

The Mavs have yet to experience a nail-biter, as their smallest margin of victory this season was six points over Missouri Western. The fast paced offense of this team to go along with tough on-the-ball defense makes these Mavericks quite dangerous heading into their four-game home stand.

The Mavericks will next compete against Emporia State in the Sapp Fieldhouse Saturday, Dec. 8, at 7 p.m.

Get out and watch this team play basketball this weekend as they shoot for 7-0. Tickets are free with your UNO student MavCard.

Mav women split weekend tourney

JASON SIBSON
SPORTS EDITOR

After suffering their first setback of the season in Friday's 70-56 loss to Central Missouri, the UNO women's basketball team bounced back in a big way.

Saturday evening under the lights of the Sapp Fieldhouse, the Mavericks roughed up the Roadrunners of Metro State, banked a 69-56 victory and salvaged a split in this weekend's Downtown DoubleTree Classic.

UNO shot a season-low 34 percent from the floor in Friday night's loss to the Jennies. The game was dented in Central Missouri's favor in the form of a 13-0 run late in the first half. The resilient Mavericks then bounced back with a 14-2 run of their own, only to watch the Jennies close the game out with one more run in the game's final stages to seal their third win of the season.

The Mavs got a taste of what competition will be like beginning next season, as they will join Central Missouri and other quality programs in the Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletics



photo by Bill Wendt
Amanda Brodack backs down Central Missouri's Rebecca Roberts.

Association in 2008.

UCM senior guard Lindsey Maple proved to be too much for the hosts on Friday, making 13 of her 15 free throws en route to a 24-point night.

UNO Head Coach Patty Patton Shearer refocused her troops following their first loss of the season, and sophomore guard Alyssa Green and company played much better on Saturday night.

After falling into a 10-2 hole in the game's opening minutes, the Mavericks took control and maintained it thanks in part to Green's 14 points and sophomore forward Jill Wolf's career-high 10 rebounds. The convincing win moved UNO to 6-1 on the season halfway through this 10-game home stand.

The Mavericks will return to action tonight as they welcome into Omaha a seemingly inferior Peru State team. The Bobcats lost their first seven games of the season before getting their first win on Nov. 24.

Tip-off is set for 6 p.m., with tickets available for free with your UNO student MavCard.

Arts & Leisure

Charley Reed | Arts & Leisure

Page 5

arts@unogateway.com | December 4, 2007

Angels fly onto the Omaha stage



snapproductions.com

REVIEW BY
NICOLE HIGGINBOTHAM
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

What do a drug user, a man with AIDS, a closeted Mormon lawyer and a gay Jewish man who can't deal with the facts of life all have in common? They are all characters in Tony Kushner's *Angels in America: Part I Millennium Approaches*.

Directed by Thomas Lowe, a UNO alumnus, *Angels* is performed on SNAP! Production's black box stage. The play makes the audience really think about the value of life.

Joe (Brian Zealand) battles everyday with his wife Harper's (Jennifer Gilg) drug problem. At the same time, he has some problems of his own. Joe is a Mormon lawyer who's struggling to play with the big dogs like his boss, Roy Cohn (Michael Simpson). Roy, who wants Joe to defend him in trial, is hiding the fact that he has AIDS. By the way, both Joe and Roy are closeted homosexuals.

Meanwhile, Louis (Stephen Michael Shelton) is trying to deal with the fact that his partner of four-and-a-half years, Prior (Matt Allen), has AIDS. However, with all of Prior's crying, screaming and vomiting, Louis is slowly debating whether or not he should leave him.

"You can love someone and fail them," says Louis. "You can love someone and not be able to..."

Shelton does an excellent job in the role of Louis. The weight of the situation that his character goes through is evident in his saddened stare. It is also an interesting fact that Shelton was much younger than his counterpart, Allen.

The tremendous age gap plays well into the fact that Louis is a seemingly ignorant character. In the play, it adds more depth to the tragedy he is going

through with Prior. Louis seems almost innocent and his battles, more of that of a young adult.

Allen uses his role to show an insight in the struggle with AIDS. The audience has the opportunity to witness the physical pain that Prior goes through, his doctor visits, his hospitalization and the toll that relationships played in the whole situation.

Roderick Leon Cotton plays Belize, Prior's dedicated friend, as well as Mr. Lies, Harper's frequent hallucination. This contrast of characters allows the audience to see Cotton's expanded acting abilities. His depiction of Belize is that of a flamboyant, loyal friend, while Mr. Lies is played as a deep-voiced sales agent.

Cotton gives the audience an opportunity to laugh, breaking the tension of the weighted lives of the main characters. He was especially hilarious in the scene where Louis and Belize get into a fight.

The timing of *Angels* was very befitting as World AIDS Day, a day dedicated to the education of HIV/AIDS and the celebration of those who lost their lives to the disease, was on Dec. 1.

The play is well done given the fact that the theater is funded mostly on donations. Consequently, the notion that the set wasn't as elaborate as those in other theaters was understandable.

Nevertheless, SNAP! Productions, like always, has incredible actors to make up for it. The teamwork in this theatre is amazing as well. Several people have to resort to playing multiple roles and there are a few gender reversals.

It is interesting to see how the actors and production crew bandtogether to make this show work.

"Working on *Millennium Approaches* has been a total joy," said Lowe. "This play has been with me for the better part of 15 years. I had the life-changing experience of playing Louis in Cindy Melby-Phaneuf's dynamite UNO production five years ago when I was in grad school."

Angels in America: Part I Millennium Approaches will run until Dec. 9.

For more information contact SNAP! Production's box office at 341-2757 or visit the Web site snapproductions.com.



Prior (Matt Allen) and Harper (Jennifer Gilg) share a dream during *Angels in America*.

snapproductions.com

Seether brings heat before storm to Sokol crowd Friday evening

REVIEW BY
WHITNEY PANDIL
CONTRIBUTOR

Groups of shirtless men, on the last day of November, congregate alongside women fully outfitted in winter coats, hats and gloves inside Sokol Auditorium. Odd, but explainable.

As the bitter cold realities of winter began to set in, 1400 lucky individuals enjoyed sauna-like temperatures as they waited in anticipation for the show to start.

Opening the show was Red, a hard-rock quintet known for their powerful and sometimes dangerous stage antics. Their MySpace.com profile mentions guitarist Anthony Armstrong's bad habit of tomahawking lead vocalist Barnes, an act seen repeatedly during their 30 minute set.

Uncharacteristic of most hard rock, Red infuses classical music elements to complement their optimistic lyrics. Ending their set with "Breathe into Me," the strong vocals were paired with a catchy guitar riff, enhanced by the perfect timing and execution of a double guitar kick, inciting riotous applause.

Thirty minutes between sets enabled the crowd to momentarily disengage, redirecting their focus to the approaching ice storm, reminiscing about their favorite concerts of the past - and to refill on beer, of course.

Recapturing the crowd's attention with a loud and boisterous entrance was Hurt, a band that blends classical violin with thunderous drums and razor-sharp guitar riffs. The lead vocalist and violinist J. Loren, resembled a younger Johnny Cash with his all-black attire and deep, soulful voice.



seether.com
Seether's Shaun Morgan, electrified the sold-out crowd at Sokol last Friday.

A very Sedaris Christmas at Macy's

REVIEW BY
NICOLE HIGGINBOTHAM
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

After the Blue Barn's rendition of *The Santaland Diaries*, directed by Susan Clement-Toberer, Christmas will never be the same.

The play, based on an essay by humorist David Sedaris (*Naked, Me Talk Pretty One Day*) begins as the main character, also named David (Tim Siragusa), is applying for a job as a Christmas elf at Macy's.

He describes this strenuous process, ironically, by noting the fact that he is in his mid-30s and is applying for a job where he has to wear candy cane stockings.

Upon receiving this interesting position, David gets the opportunity to explore the truth behind the magic of Santa Claus. He takes the audience through various areas like the vomit corner, exposes the racism that many parents hold and makes fun of the plastic personalities of the families that are trying to savor that perfect Christmas moment.



npr.org
David Sedaris is the author of *The Santaland Diaries*.

Unfortunately, this production of *The Santaland Diaries* seemed a little plastic itself.

Though the lines of the play were well written, the main character didn't have the zeal to make the hour-long performance interesting. For the most part Siragusa was the only character on the stage, and it seemed like he just read his lines, give or take a couple of funny moments where he mocked the female receptionists.

However, the poor acting did not spill over into the production aspects. Blue Barn's stage was very well decorated thanks to a generous contribution from Omaha Steaks. The production crew was able to put together a colorful set that emulated the joy of the season.

The Santaland Diaries runs Nov. 29 through Dec. 22 and tickets are \$15 for students. Doors open at 7 p.m. and curtain is at 7:30 p.m. for the Thursday through Saturday shows. Blue Barn will have two late-night showings at 10 p.m. on Dec. 15 and Dec. 22, as well as a special Sunday performance on Dec. 9.

For more information or tickets call (402) 345-1576.

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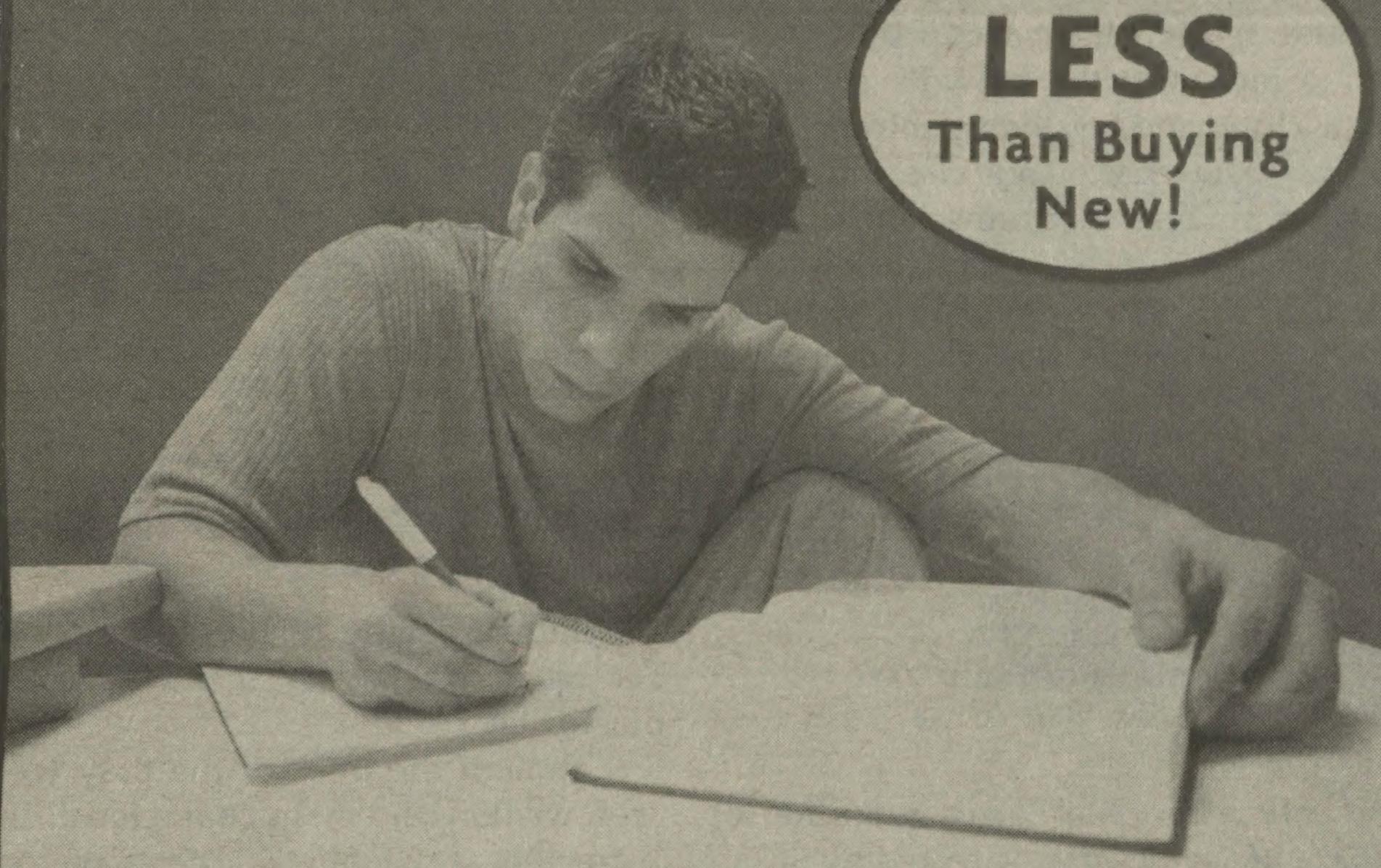
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Bender's Big Score DVD a hardcore *Futurama* fan's dream come true

REVIEW BY
ADAM GEHRINGER
CONTRIBUTOR

Good news everyone! *Futurama* is back with its first ever straight-to-DVD feature length movie: *Bender's Big Score*.

This movie is one of the few straight-to-DVD releases that should have been in theaters.

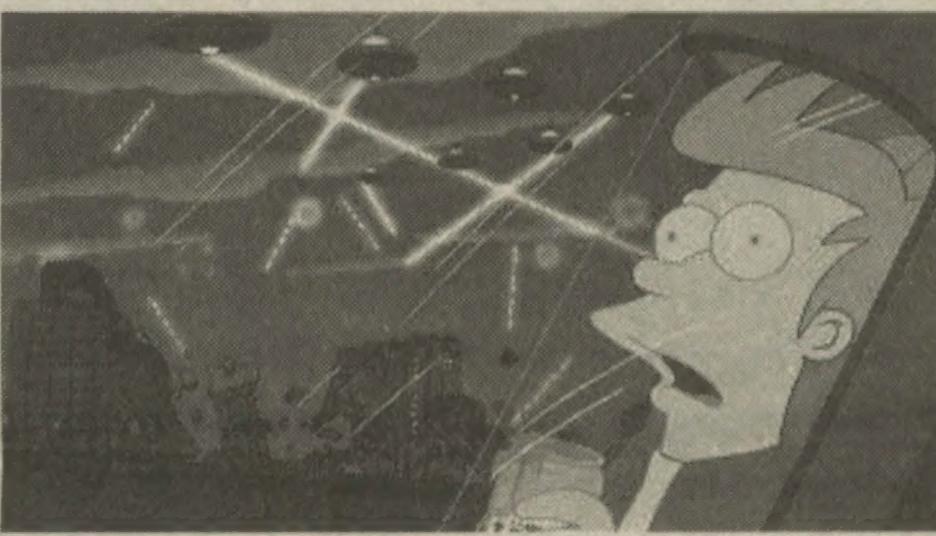
Fans of the original *Futurama* series will be overjoyed with this triumphant return of all of our 31st century friends.

The movie contains reference after reference to the original series and all the classic *Futurama* comedy. There are things in the movie you would expect, as well as a few that you might not.

Co-creators and series writers Matt Groening and David X. Cohen do a masterful job of mixing comedy, references and an edge-of-your-seat, time paradoxical plot which prevents *Bender's Big Score* from being a *Futurama* fanboy flop.

The only drawback of the DVD is that many jokes aimed at hard core *Futurama* fans will be lost on the casual fan or new viewers.

However, the DVD also includes



In *Bender's Big Score*, Bender travels to the past and destroys New York City.

From *SEETHER*: Page 5

Shaun Morgan's voice, the intensity of the drums and the unforgettable guitar riffs to relay the struggles and triumphs of Morgan, the primary songwriter.

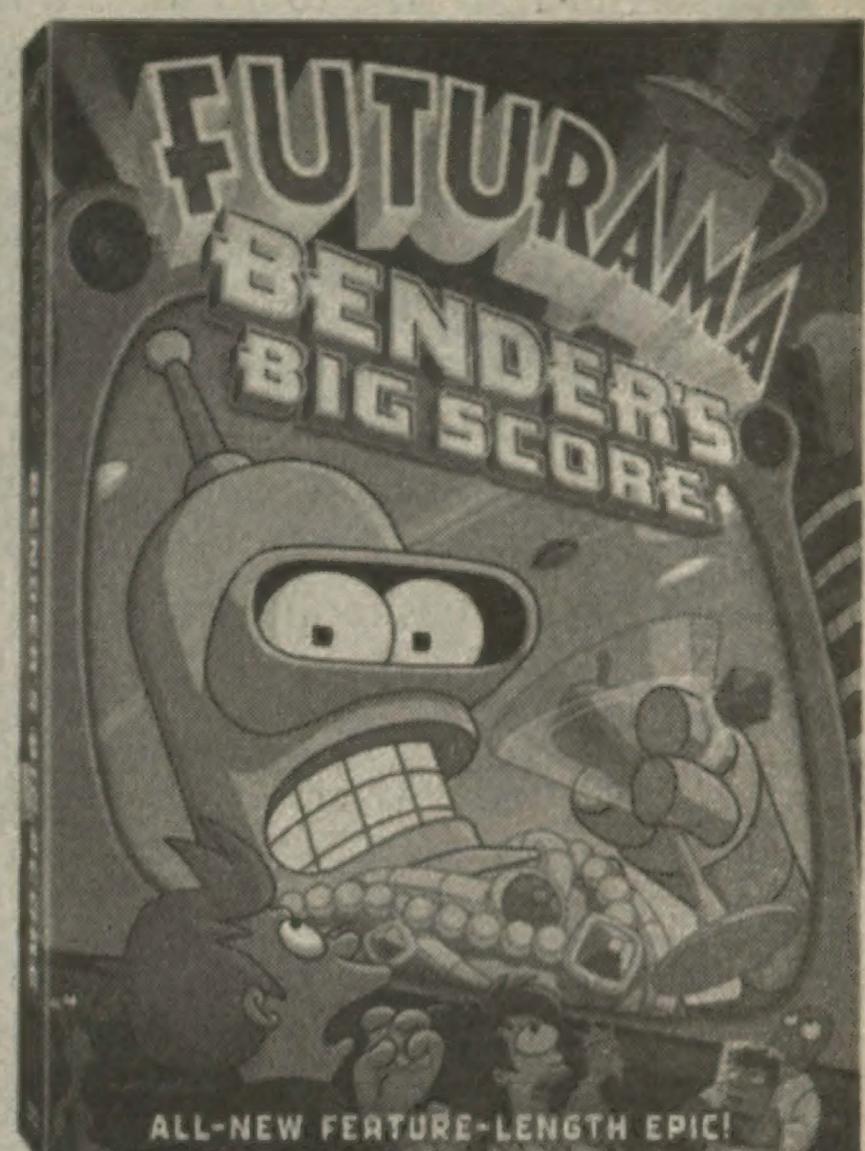
Everything became bigger and louder as Morgan's passion-filled lyrics filtered through the sea of bouncing bodies. His screaming vocals created a feverish energy that reached the upper deck, bringing those sitting to their feet.

The foundation of the auditorium shook with the intensity of an earthquake as songs like "Truth," "Needles" and "Remedy" created seismic waves of activity that ended in eruptions of applause.

Mixing old and new, Seether played fan favorites like "Fine Again," "Your Bore" and "Driven Under," as well as introducing new songs "FMLHM" and "Like Suicide."

"Fake It," the first single from their

some interesting bonus features including commentary from Groening, Cohen, voice actor Billy West and a host of other voice actors.



Bender's Big Score is the first of four straight-to-DVD releases for *Futurama*.

Another special feature of the DVD is a full, 22-minute episode of "Everybody Loves Hypnotoad," the fake, hit 31st century sitcom from the original series.

Bender's Big Score is the first of four straight-to-DVD *Futurama* movies. The next three movies – *The Beast with a Billion Backs*, *Bender's Game* and *Into the Wild Green Yonder* – are set to be released some time next year.

Whether you're a casual fan or a hardcore *Futurama* fanboy, *Bender's Big Score* is sure to keep you laughing well into the 31st century.



latest release, *Finding Beauty in Negative Spaces*, was the fan favorite of the night. The rails of the upper deck rocked precariously as it attempted to contain the excitement of those leaning over to project their voices over the crowd.

Seether drummer John Humphrey took the crowd head on, performing a fast-paced and energizing solo, allowing Morgan a much-needed break.

As Bassist Dale Stewart was preparing for the acoustic set, his band mates surprised him, and the audience, with a candle-lit cake in honor of his birthday, followed by the traditional "Happy Birthday" song.

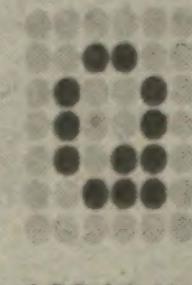
Throughout the hour-long set, the trio exchanged hugs, playful punches and jokes, relaying to the audience the close-knit bond that enables them to continue to grow creatively and bring their fans the dynamic sound and poignant lyrics they have come to expect.

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Activists lead charge in petition fight over caged chickens in California

By JIM DOWNING
McCLATCHY NEWSPAPERS

LIVINGSTON, Calif. (MCT) — What do chickens want?

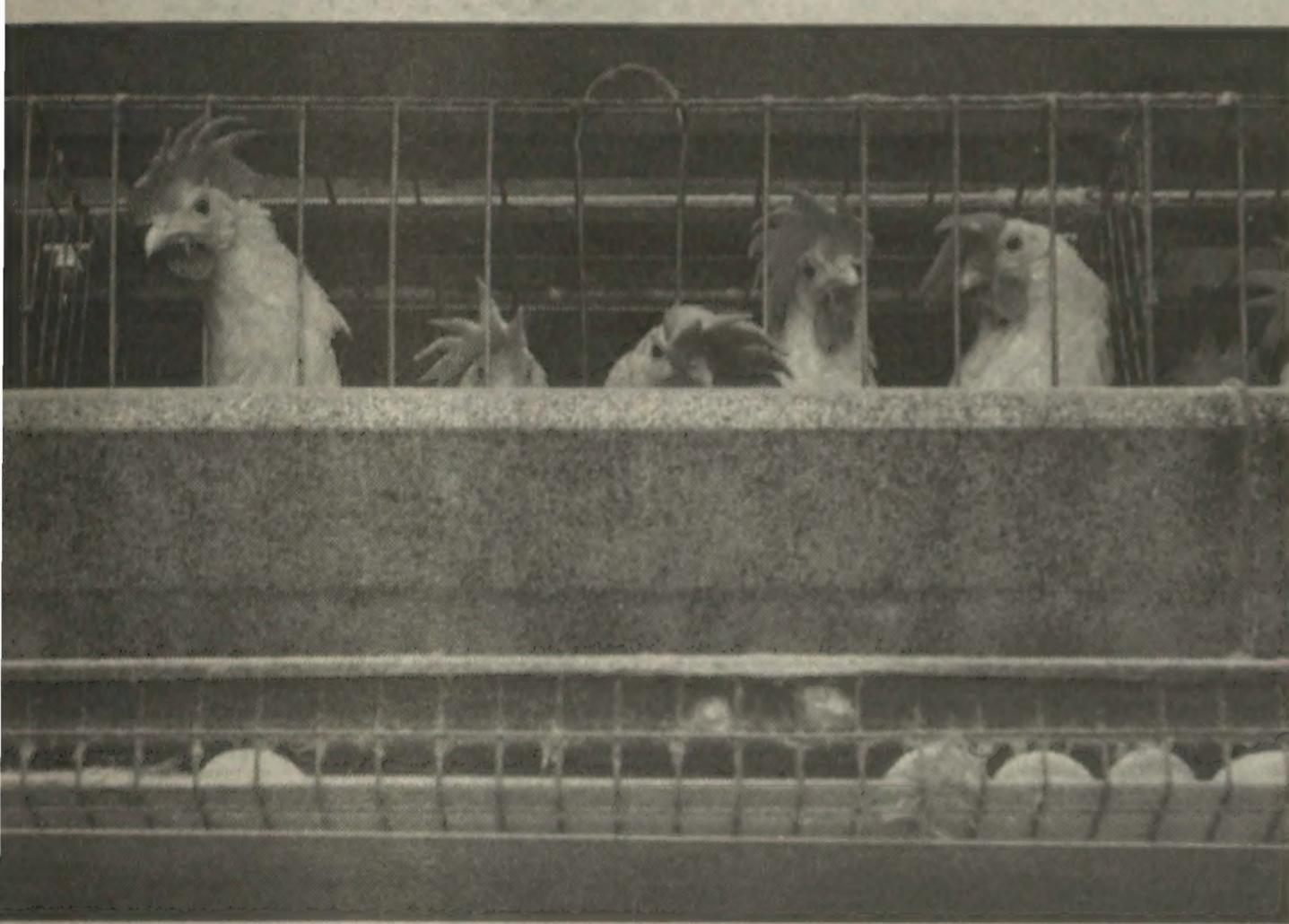
Not so much, really: room for a dust bath, a place to perch, a nest. Absent those three basics — the nest especially — chickens get stressed, animal behavior experts say.

But most egg-laying chickens live without any of those things, in bare cages like the ones stacked four rows high in the J.S. West and Cos. barn in Merced County.

Nearly 150,000 white chickens pace and murmur here, eight birds in each 4-square-foot wire box. A fine dust sticks in the throat. It's 10:30 a.m. and the egg counter on the wall already has topped 59,000.

The Humane Society of the United States says caged chickens suffer — and it's gathering signatures to put a measure on the November 2008 ballot that would make California the first state to ban barns outfitted like this one.

"You don't need to be a scientist to know that confining a bird to a space in which it can barely move is cruel and inhumane," said Paul Shapiro, director of the



Florence Low / Sacramento Bee / MCT

50,000 hens live and lay eggs in stacked cages at an industrial henhouse in Livingston, Calif. The U.S. Humane Society is pushing a ballot initiative that would make California the first state in the nation to ban cages on egg farms.

Humane Society's factory farming campaign.

The proposal, which would take effect in 2015, rides an international wave of opposition to farm-animal confinement. The European Union is already in the process of phasing cages out altogether by 2012, and in the past two years dozens of food-industry trendsetters, from Ben & Jerry's to Burger King, have pledged to buy some or even all of their eggs from hens raised cage-free.

Cage-free eggs command a premium price. Many of the country's largest conventional egg farmers have already diversified their operations to include some cage-free barns.

But the Humane Society's proposal in California — and the fear that similar regulations will follow elsewhere in the country — has scrambled the nation's \$6 billion egg industry.

Farmers, including many already deep into the cage-free business, say a ban on cages would run many of them out of business, drive up prices and restrict consumer choice.

What's more, they say, banning cages wouldn't do much to improve the lot of California's 19 million laying hens.

In a rare move for an industry in which each visitor to a chicken house raises the chances of a ruinous disease outbreak, some farmers have opened their barns to reporters, an effort to demonstrate that while a caged life may not give a hen everything she wants, she's likely to be cleaner and healthier than her average cage-free counterpart.

Some animal-welfare experts say they have a point.

"When you give a hen some of these behavioral freedoms, you increase health risks," said Joy Mench, a University of California, Davis, professor who has worked with both the Humane Society and mainstream egg producers to craft welfare standards for caged and cage-free hens.

In the cage-free systems, perhaps 30,000 chickens live together in huge barns, each with about 2 square feet of floor space. They get nesting spots, perches and loose material to scratch around in, but typically have no access

to the out-of-doors (unlike the hens that lay certified organic and free-range eggs).

Europe's continent-wide experience in converting to cage-free egg production has already yielded thousands

See CAGE-FREE: Page 8

'Egg'citing Infomation

What's In a Label?

Supermarket eggs now come in a half-dozen or more varieties. A guide to the labels:

Terms defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. "Organic" eggs are certified by a third party:

No hormones: By law, chickens cannot be treated with hormones, so this label is effectively meaningless.

- No hormones / Natural: Means only that the eggs are raw and don't have artificial flavors or colors added.

- No hormones / No antibiotics: Chickens are not treated with antibiotics.

- No hormones / Organic: Chickens must be raised without cages and on only organic feed, with no antibiotics. They must also have some access to the outside.

Other labels reviewed by USDA on a case-by-case basis:

- Cage-free: Chickens are not kept in cages, and should have access to a nest box for laying, a place to scratch in the dirt, and a perch.

- Omega-3: Chickens are fed a special diet that raises the levels of certain fatty acids in the eggs. The label doesn't imply anything about how the chickens are housed.

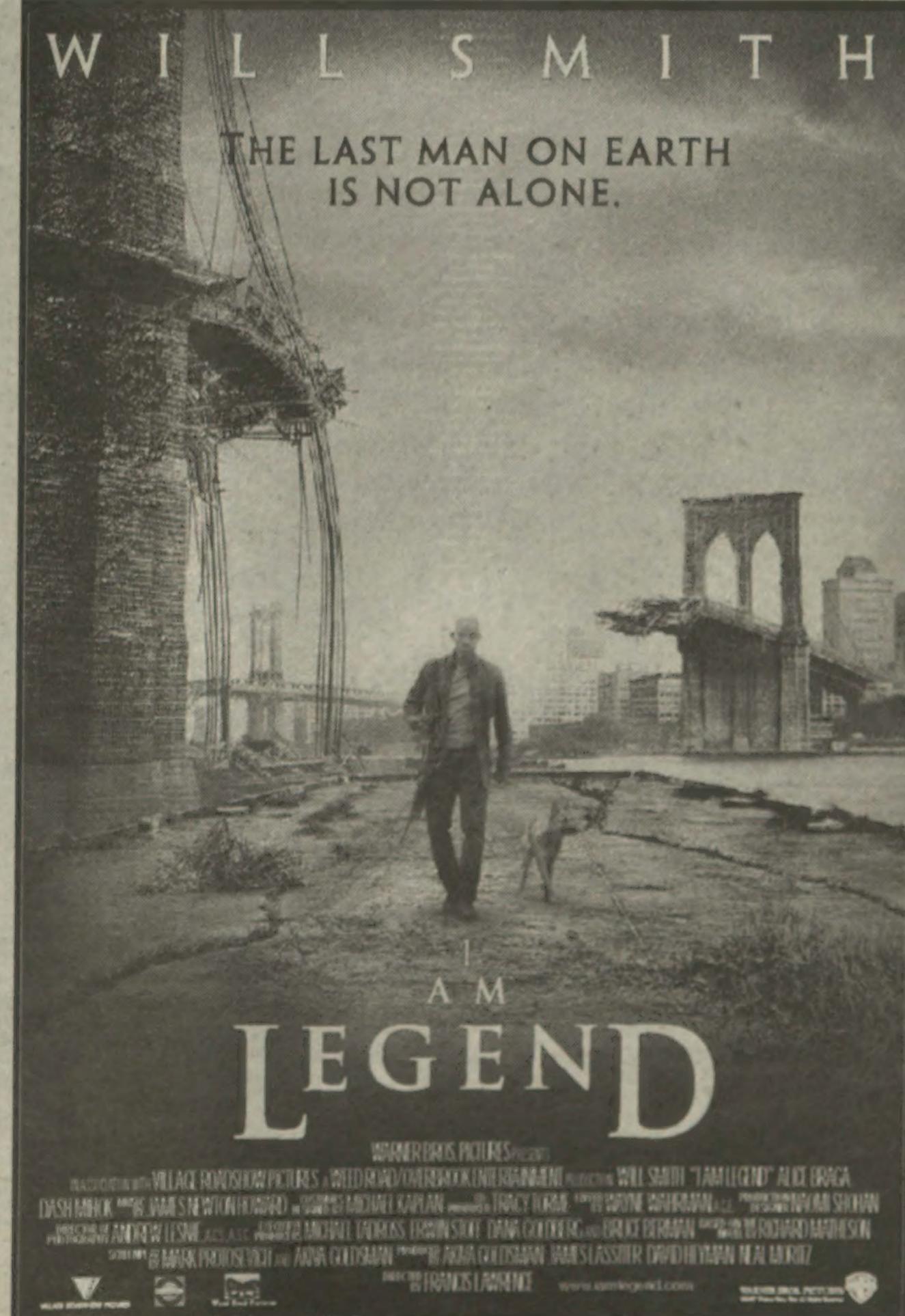
- Free range or free roaming: Meets the cage-free standards, plus provides some access to the outdoors. The USDA regulates this label for poultry, but not for eggs.

- Vegetarian diet: Feed does not include animal protein, a common supplement.

Sources: USDA; United Egg Producers



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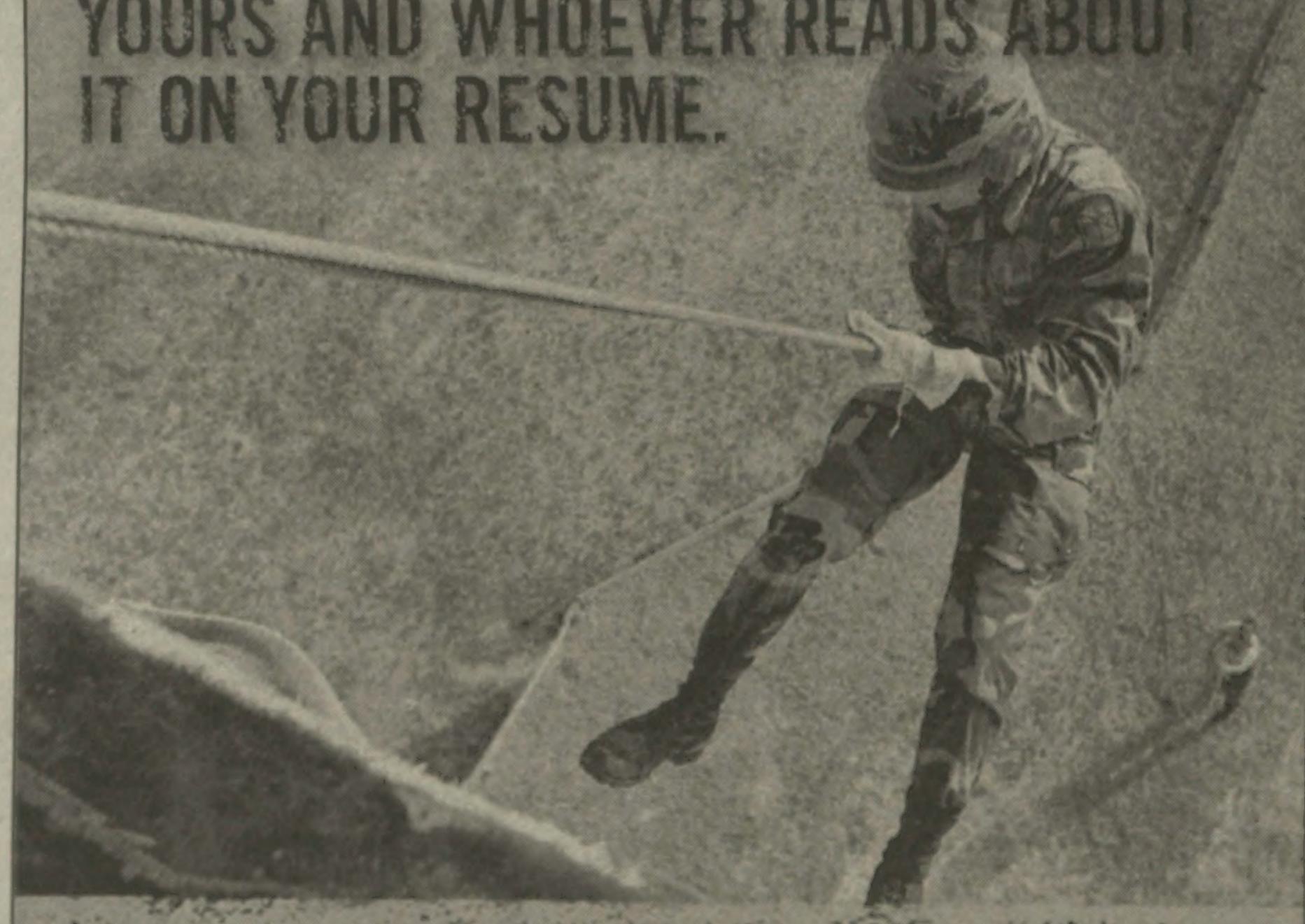
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From CAGE-FREE: Page 7

of pages of studies comparing the two systems, Mench said. Two key results:

– During their roughly two-year laying life, cage-free hens die at more than twice the rate of caged hens, likely the result of increased exposure to one another, and to their own manure.

– Cage-free hens suffer high rates of broken bones – 67 percent in one survey. Most modern laying hens suffer from osteoporosis, Mench said, and they're easily injured while jumping around a cage-free barn. On the other hand, she noted, workers often inadvertently break the bones of caged birds as they are removed before being euthanized.

The Humane Society's Shapiro agreed that cage-free systems are far from perfect. But, he said, while birds in a cage-free barn may face a higher risk of disease or death, the alternative – life in a cage – guarantees suffering.

Both the egg industry and Shapiro credit the power of the Humane Society's message for the boom in the market for cage-free eggs. Together with organic, free-range and other "designer" eggs, they now command more than 5 percent of the market, with sales growing strongly.

In the parking lot of the east Sacramento Trader Joe's store recently, Polly Gastaldi said she's a regular buyer of cage-free eggs. But she has mixed feelings.

"I hate to see 'em in cages, but they say that the cage-free ones may not be so much better," she said.

Cage-free eggs are generally more expensive than conventional eggs in supermarkets, though there's a great deal of variation between brands as well as from chain to chain. In Sacramento last week, store-brand large white eggs were running between 99 cents and \$1.99 a dozen, while cage-free eggs started at \$2.29 – Gastaldi paid \$2.49 – and went as high as \$3.99.

It's unclear how much the Humane Society initiative would drive up prices for consumers, because it would still allow California grocers to sell low-priced conventional eggs produced in other states. Last year, 29 percent of the

8.2 billion eggs sold in California came from out of state, according to state department of agriculture figures.

The retail price spread between caged and cage-free eggs exaggerates the difference in production costs, which is only about 12 cents a dozen, according to a 2005 review by Don Bell, an emeritus poultry specialist at the University of California, Riverside.

Bell, however, said that figure doesn't convey the impact on the industry of a ban on cages. In addition to the huge capital cost of a switch, it takes significantly more land and labor to produce cage-free eggs, and it's likely to take farmers years to optimize production in a cage-free system, he said. Outfitting a cage-free barn costs about \$14 a bird, according to equipment dealers, vs. around \$11 per bird to outfit a caged barn, though neither figure includes the price of the building.

Automation on caged chicken operations – conveyor belts, automatic feeders and mechanical manure scrapers – has made it possible for a single worker to tend 150,000

hens, said Tom Silva, a vice president at J.S. West who designed and built the company's henhouse here in Livingston, about 10 miles south of Turlock.

The chickens are so unused to seeing anyone but caretakers in blue coveralls that Silva's appearance in the barn raises a storm of squawks. They settle down quickly and return to pecking at their endless trough of corn and soy. Silva plucks a hen from a cage. She settles quietly into the crook of his arm.

For most of these hens' lives, the lights stay on 16 hours a day. A 75-degree breeze wafts out of the ceiling and into the floor, keeping out the smell of the manure pit below. Each hen lays, on average, around 23 eggs a month.

The caretaker's daily tasks are checking the machinery and the mousetraps, and removing the 10 or so birds that die.

"Everything is engineered to be a perfect day in here, all the time," Silva said. Several egg

farmers interviewed for this story stressed that there are good and bad examples of both caged and cage-free egg barns. But even longtime cage-free farmers gave the Humane Society's proposal a tepid response.

Mike Sencer, executive vice president at Fullerton, Calif.-based Hidden Villa Farms, began raising some of his chickens cage-free and organic in the early 1990s, and is now one of the country's leading suppliers. But conventional eggs remain a big part of his company's business.

"There are consumers that want the cage-free, and some want the caged, and I see the pros and cons of both," Sencer said.

Mench, the University of California, Davis, animal behavior expert, said caged systems have gotten significantly more humane in the last decade, with birds allotted more floor space – though the minimum is still just 67 square inches each – and enough head room so that they can stand up fully.

For her own kitchen, Mench said, she buys neither cage nor standard cage-free eggs.

Instead, she pays \$7 a dozen to Nigel Walker, whose 3,000 chickens spend most of their days outside on his farm near Dixon. Walker runs one of only two commercial-scale "pastured" egg operations in Northern California. His hens are currently pecking at what's left of his organic strawberry crop, he said.

Mench said she buys Walker's eggs not for animal-welfare reasons, but because they taste good, are laid locally and meld crop production and livestock husbandry the way old-fashioned farms did.

"I prefer to get my food from that environment," she said.



Florence Low / Sacramento Bee / MCT

Veronica Perez removes cracked eggs from a conveyor at a processing plant in Livingston, Calif. on Nov. 9.

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